

ARTIFACTS OF STUDENT WRITING

DEFENDING A GRADE

SITUATION

"But you said that was good."

"Well, it—yes, it showed a good sense of how to organize a paper, but . . ."

"So why did I get a C-minus?"

Laura gave the class the following assignment:

Write a one-paragraph essay in which you tell what makes your family unique. Be sure to have a strong topic sentence, mention all your immediate family members, stay on the topic, and end with a solid conclusion.

In response, Jeffrey wrote:

There are four people in my family but I only live with three. I have one sister and one brother. We live with my dad most of the time but sometimes we spend a vacation with my mom. She's busy. My sister is a senior and will graduate soon. I think she will go to a school near my mom. And live with her. I still have two years to go. I might or might not go to college. I'd like to be a lawyer because they make a lot of money. My brother is only seven. He doesn't know what he wants to do yet. But he has a lot of time. My dad is an architect. My mom is a decorator. That's how we live.

When the papers are returned, Jeffrey asks to see the teacher in private to discuss his grade of C-minus. The following conversation ensues:

Laura begins in her most encouraging teacher manner: "I like

this essay because it sticks to the point about what everyone is either doing or planning to do. You show a good sense of how to make a paper cohesive."

Jeffrey doesn't smile. "So why did I get a C-minus?"

"Well, the assignment asked that you tell what makes your family *unique*."

"I did that."

"Without looking at the paper, tell me what is unique about your family."

"I don't know. My dad's an architect."

"What kinds of things does he design?"

"I don't know. He designs stores mostly."

"Does that take him out of town often?" Laura asks.

"No."

"Is there anything unusual about his work?"

Jeffrey shrugs, "No."

"Let's go back to my original question. What is unique about your family? Every family is unique in some way."

"I don't know if it's unique, but we don't live together."

"That's something you could have written about," Laura prompts.

"I did."

"But you didn't say much about it. You focused on what everyone is doing or plans to do."

"But you said that was good."

"Well, it—yes, it showed a good sense of how to organize a paper, but . . ."

"So why did I get a C-minus?"

"Because you didn't really focus on what the assignment asked for."

"Like what?"

"Like how your family is unique."

"I told you! We live apart."

"But you didn't explore it."

"You didn't say I was supposed to *explore* it. Look, here's a topic sentence, then I mention each member of my family, and then there is a conclusion. I don't understand why I got a C-minus."

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Why is Laura having difficulty getting through to this student?
2. What could she do differently?
3. Would you have given this paper a different grade? Why or why not?

The Right Question

As my friend turned onto the street, we both saw a party going on. We got out of the car and had just stepped onto the sidewalk when we heard the sirens. All of the police cars stopped in the middle of the street, and the two officers walked into the house next door.

When they came out, Mrs. Johnson was crying about what had happened. She was a nice lady; it hurt me to see her this way. But none of the officers cared. They were asking her questions and doing other things as if it were just business. My friend said something to me, and I agreed.

So we walked over to the officer, and I asked him a question. I'll never forget the way he looked at me. When he answered, I expected him to be negative, but his words were so inspiring that I decided right then to become a police officer.

Police work has many benefits, some more rewarding than others. It can also be interesting, depending on the circumstances. But it can also be dangerous at times. Still, I am very glad that I made this decision, and that I got the right answer on the night when my neighbor had her problems.

FIGURE 4.6 *Example of Middle School Writing*

The Day I Took Off

On day on Firday everything looking Beautiful Kids running up and down my street. My Friend Andy ran past and I call him I said lets go do something lets have some fun so my Friend and I went to the park and it was Fill with people Black White young, old people. We walked through the parked and we play a little Basket Ball we won a couple of games. I wanted something to drink my Throat was dry Andy ask me did I want to go to the store I said yes. So we walked to 7-11 and Bough some of them little juices. I Bough three apple juice. Andy got three grape. the juices cost \$1.50 for three. we had five dollar each now we got three dollar and fifty cent each. We decide to try the Bus to the mall so we could watch all those pretty ladys and young lady come out of the stores. we went to this one Big Mall it has everything in it. store next to store then I get tirer walking whose all those store so I told Andy let's go home I just took off and no one Knew we will caught the next Bus home OK yes.

Ypsilanti High School
Ninth grade class
Poem from 8th grade

**I am a hungry man who loves food and Cigarettes.
I wonder if there was an endless Cigarettes pack.
I hear thousands of people munching away on chips.
I see the biggest bag of tobacco.
I won't to eat all the food in the world.
I am a hungry man who loves food and Cigarettes.**

**I pretend to be Superman.
I feel like I'm young again.
I touch soft creamy pudding.
I worry that I might get caught.
I cry when I don't have a Cigarette.
I am a hungry man who loves food and Cigarettes.**

**I understand that I'm not the only one starving.
I say I'm going to quit smoking.
I dream to be skinny.
I try to eat all the food I can.
I hope that I will get out of this place and eat at my favorite
restaurant.
I am a hungry man who loves food and Cigarettes
MR. Vann Dann**

Black Quarterbacks in the NFL

Are black Quarterbacks getting enough playing time in the NFL? I think they do, but other people think that white Quarterbacks play a lot more often. I wonder why people think like this? It may be a prejudice thing, but I really doubt that, or it's the coaches that work them hard but don't put them in until they absolutely need to, or people watch their favorite team on TV or whatever and the Quarterbacks are white. I think those people who think this way are wrong. I think that there's as much white quarterbacks as there are blacks that get the same amount of play time.

As the famous quote in Donovan McNabb's interview, he said "There are not that many African American Quarterbacks, so we have to do a little extra", *In the Cumberland times* they've written "I would think black quarterbacks are scrutinized more closely than white quarterbacks are, because, like anything else, the NFL is a reflection of society". The black men are stereotyped as gangsters, drug pushers and thugs.

What this passage means to me is that the black players are the ones getting looked at the most, good or bad. In one of my readings it said, that there's only 6 black quarterbacks that are starting in the NFL. And there are only thirty two teams in the NFL. So it's not that white quarterbacks get to play more, it's that there's not a lot of black

quarterbacks starting. Another reason why there's not a lot of black quarterbacks, is because they have switched there position from being quarterbacks, to becoming running backs. It is said that they coach's use their athletic ability that they have to run. The black men thing it is racism is the reason that they are not chosen to be quarter backs.

I think that location has something to do with it, also from my understanding, black people don't like being in the real cold weather, like the Green Bay packers is in Wisconsin were it gets very cold. There are certain states that don't have a large black population either, so that could be another reason why they are not on certain teams.

I did a survey with the NFL to see what teams had black and white quarter backs. Twelve teams out of the thirty-two teams had 12 black quarterbacks and out of the 12 teams, only one team had all black quarterbacks, and that was the Jacksonville Jaguars, Together all twelve teams, there was a total of 15 black quarterbacks, and six of them start the games.

I wanted to know how they are paid, so I looked on Yahoo to see what type of pay they got. I found it interesting how they are paid and how the people that don't get paid must do it for the love of the game.

"The main AFL the one with the network television contract is pretty well paid. I am told that most of the players make about 60K with some quarterbacks exceeding 100K. The other arena leagues are bad, with some not getting paid at all and most getting a few hundred a game. The top AFL league is in major cities and the players are celebs who make money doing promos, personal appearances, etc. Not a bad gig for a short season". (answers.yahoo.com/question/index).

Social Groups

Since the first grade I have been involved in many social groups. Some of the social groups that I've been in are sport groups such as basketball teams for my old Middle school West and my AAU travel basketball team called the Program and hopefully here at Ypsi High. I also was involved with soccer teams for recreation teams and school teams. The schools that I played for are West Middle School and Ypsi High School. My favorite sport group that I've participated in was basketball for AAU. I enjoyed playing AAU the best because basketball is my favorite sport, its fun, it was a good experience, and it helped me get better and more confident about myself and my game. I have also been involved with other social groups as well. The other social groups that I've been in was Boy Scouts when I was in the Second grade. When I was in Boy Scouts I wasn't really involved and wasn't really interested in it because I wasn't interested in nature really. They also did a lot of activities that I didn't really like. It was a alright experience for me kid of I just wasn't into it. And the last social group that I'm going to name that I've been in is band. I was in band at West Middle School during the 7th and 8th grade. At the beginning I played the trumpet and I really didn't like it because it is real hard to blow and it got tiring to play. Then my teacher Mr. Kazmerski who is the band teacher at Ypsi High School now suggested that I played the tuba and I got good at it and I just stuck to that for the rest of my band career. When I was in there I couldn't read music to save my life! And that was really tuff. So when we practiced or had a concert I wrote the fingerings underneath the note and that's how I read

my music. Band was a good experience to me but I am no longer involved with it because I never learned how to read the notes or scales or the tempo's. Out of all the social groups that I've been involved with I would still have to say my favorite one that I have been involved with is AAU basketball. I love basketball and I love to play it that's why its my favorite social group. I plan on playing AAU as long as I can and hopefully carry on my skills that I developed from AAU and other programs and take it to college and then go to the NBA. But I am looking forward to this years season at Ypsi High.

By: Brandon Frame

1st hour English

Name: _____ Date: _____ Hour: _____

Social Groups Essay

Due: Friday, October 19, 2007

Prompt: Write about a time you have been aware of social groups.

Directions: In response to the prompt, write a four to six page (typed in a 12 pt. font, double-spaced) essay.

Steps: Each step needs to be signed by me. There must be evidence of your work for each step. Keep all steps in the Social Groups Essay Folder.

- (1) Prewrite – write whatever comes to you mind about the prompt. Write for about 10-20 minutes. Do not make corrections yet.
- (2) Research – Look at all of the work you have done for this unit. What other questions do you have? Where can you find answers? Will any of this help your essay? Go back to your prewriting. Add more using some of the information from your notes. Be sure to include key concepts or terms.
- (3) Decide what your topic will be.
- (4) Decide who your audience will be.
- (5) Decide what type of essay you will use. (HINTS: You could choose personal narrative, reflection essay, or persuasive essay. If you have other ideas check with me first.)
- (6) Complete an outline or graphic organizer on your topic and essay to make sure you have enough support or to determine additional resources you will need.
- (7) Write a Draft of your essay.
- (8) Edit your essay on your own. Use the requirement checklist and the rubric. Consider the connotation of the words you have selected. Make revisions.
- (9) Have a peer or interested adult edit your essay. Make revisions.
- (10) Refine or add rhetorical devices.
- (11) Print a final draft.